

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ATHENS 10873 011319Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-03 AID-05 IO-13 CIAE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /082 W
-----019589 011941Z /40

R 011226Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3543
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
USCINCEUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ATHENS 10873

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, GR
SUBJECT:HUMAN RIGHTS EVALUATION: GREECE

REF: (A) STATE 282352, (B) ATHENS 8576 (NOTAL)

1. ONE OF THE FINAL ACTS OF THE PREVIOUS GREEK PARLIAMENT WAS
PASSAGE OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE LAW GOVERNING UNIVERSAL MILITARY
TRAINING IN GREECE WHICH REGULARIZES THE SITUATION WITH RESPECT
TO THOSE WHO REFUSE TO BEAR ARMS BECAUSE OF THEIR RELIGIOUS
CONVICTIONS (REF B). BEFORE THE ADOPTION OF THIS AMENDMENT, CON-
SCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS WERE AUTOMATICALLY AND REPEATEDLY SENTENCED
TO PRISON FOR NON-FULFILLMENT OF THEIR MILITARY SERVICE OBLIG-
ATION. UNDER THE AMENDMENT, THOSE WHO REFUSE TO BEAR ARMS BECAUSE
OF THEIR RELIGIOUS CONVICTION ARE OBLIGED INSTEAD TO SERVE IN THE
MILITARY OR ENGAGE IN TRAINING FOR DOUBLE THE NORMAL PERIOD IN A
NON-ARMS BEARING CAPACITY. THE AMENDMENT FURTHER PROVIDES THAT
THOSE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS WHO STILL REFUSE TO PERFORM THEIR
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ATHENS 10873 011319Z

MILITARY SERVICE UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES MAY BE IMPRISONED UP
TO THE PERIOD THEY WOULD HAVE OTHERWISE SERVED IN THE MILITARY.
HOWEVER, ONCE RELEASED THEY ARE EXEMPTED FROM FURTHER MILITARY
SERVICE OR TRAINING. FINALLY, THE AMENDMENT STIPULATES THAT PAST
CONVICTIONS FOR FAILING TO SERVE DUE TO RELIGIOUS CONVICTION ARE
REVOKED AND THE PREVIOUS RECORD OF ANY OFFENDERS WILL BE SWEEP
CLEAN.

2. THE AMENDMENT WAS ADOPTED BY THE GOG PRIMARILY TO BENEFIT THE SEVERAL DOZEN JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WHO HAVE REFUSED TO FULFILL THEIR MILITARY SERVICE OBLIGATIONS. A VICIOUS CIRCLE EXISTED IN THE PAST WHEREBY A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR COULD BE CONVICTED AND SENTENCED REPEATEDLY FOR NOT PERFORMING HIS SERVICE. A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR CAN NOW SERVE WITH THE MILITARY IN A NON-ARMS BEARING CAPACITY, ALTHOUGH HIS TOUR WILL BE TWICE THAT OF THE REGULAR INDUCTEE. ALTERNATIVELY, HE CAN REFUSE SERVICE AND, IF CONVICTED, SERVE A TERM OF IMPRISONMENT. HOWEVER, HE NO LONGER FACES DOUBLE JEOPARDY THEREAFTER.

3. THE AMENDMENT WAS PASSED OVER STRONG OPPOSITION IN MILITARY CIRCLES AND REPRESENTS A GENUINE EFFORT BY THE GOG TO COPE WITH THE PROBLEM OF DEALING WITH CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS ON A REASONABLE BASIS. MFA OFFICIALS HAVE REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERN TO US OVER THE ANNUAL COUNTRY REPORT TO CONGRESS CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS IN GREECE WHICH IS SUBMITTED IN CONNECTION WITH SECURITY ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION AND WHICH HAS MENTIONED THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN GREECE. WE HAVE CONTINUED TO POINT OUT TO THE MFA OFFICIALS THAT THE REPORT TO CONGRESS IS REQUIRED BY LAW TO INCLUDE ANY SUCH ALLEGATIONS FROM WHATEVER SOURCES. THE MFA OFFICIALS ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE RECENT AMENDMENT WILL MITIGATE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S OBJECTIONS SINCE THOSE CONDEMNED UNDER THE EARLIER LAW HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM CONFINEMENT.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ATHENS 10873 011319Z

4. AS INSTRUCTED BY STATE 282352, WE HAVE REMINDED THE RESPONSIBLE MFA OFFICIALS OF THE REPORTING REQUIREMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS FOR COUNTRIES RECEIVING SECURITY ASSISTANCE.

MILLS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ATHENS10873
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770446-0178
Format: TEL
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197712107/aaaadmqq.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e5e85dfc-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 282352, 77 ATHENS 8576
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 116344
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS EVALUATION: GREECE
TAGS: SHUM, GR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e5e85dfc-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009